

REMARKS

Claims 1-2, 4, and 6-18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the specification and claims 1, 6, 9 and 17 are amended and claims 3 and 5 are canceled. No new matter is added.

Applicants requested a personal interview to discuss this Amendment. However, because of the Examiner's schedule, it was not possible to conduct the interview prior to the due date. Accordingly, as requested, Applicants submit this formal written response. Upon review, Applicants ask the Examiner to contact Applicants' representative to schedule a personal interview in order to advance prosecution.

The specification is amended to correct two typographical errors noted during review. No new matter is added.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3-9 and 11-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,681,372 to Yajima. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The invention is directed to methods and systems for enabling authentication of documents by creating a notarized document appended with a document data file containing exemplar and block tables based on the image data of the document useful to verify document authenticity (Figs. 3, 5). For example, the notarized document can be verified by an apparatus with a reading circuit that reads the exemplar table and block table and a decompression circuit that constructs a verifying document using the tables. A comparing circuit can then compare the verifying document image to the image of the notarized document to determine if the notarized document is genuine or not.

The creation of the exemplar and block tables are important to the ability to authenticate the document. In the claimed invention, the exemplar table includes groups of connected components within an acquired image, such as characters, serving as exemplars

from the document and location information for the exemplars (such as where the exemplars are found on the document as shown in Fig. 11). The block table includes identification of blocks of connected components (such as lines of text) as well as position information of an occurrence of an exemplar in the block (such as where each exemplar is located in the block as shown in Fig. 12). With this appended information, it is possible to determine the authenticity of the document.

Independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended for clarity to emphasize the creation of a notarized document capable of being authenticated. Independent method claim 1 incorporates features of canceled claims 3 and 5. Independent apparatus claim 9 substantially corresponds to method claim 1. Independent claim 17 is directed to verification and has been amended merely to clarify that the document data file contains an exemplar table and a block table.

Yajima does not relate to generation of notarized documents or authentication of documents as claimed. Instead, Yajima is directed to an information processing apparatus that enables a person to add written descriptor elements to a document, such as a table, useful to control formatting of the document for subsequent viewing. Yajima is in no way is directed to authentication of the content of the document, but instead is interested in the arrangement of the reproduction. Yajima also fails to provide a notarized document with an appended document data file containing exemplar and block tables as claimed useful to authenticate the document's contents.

In particular, with respect to independent claim 1, col. 11 of Yajima fails to disclose steps of "grouping connected components (within the acquired image data) into exemplars"; "identifying location information of at least one occurrence of an exemplar for each of the exemplars"; or "storing the location information in an exemplar table." Instead, the hand-

written symbols are formatting codes that are manually entered on an existing document and interpreted for subsequent display of the document. Even if these symbols were exemplars, there is no exemplar table containing location information that is appended to the document file.

Additionally, col. 10 of Yajima fails to disclose steps of "determining a block of connected components"; "identifying the position of an occurrence of at least one of the exemplars within the block"; or "storing the position in a block table." Rather, the referred to passage relates to identification of ruled lines on the document. There is no block table appended to the document that identifies blocks and the location of exemplars within each block useful to determine the authenticity of the document.

Because each and every feature of claim 1 is not disclosed in Yajima, Yajima does not anticipate claim 1 or claims dependent therefrom.

With respect to independent claim 9, Yajima fails to disclose a connected components determining circuit that groups the connected components into a plurality of groups and generates an exemplar for each group. Yajima also fails to disclose an exemplar table generation circuit that generates an exemplar table by identifying positions of an occurrence for each of the exemplars. Yajima further fails to disclose a block generation circuit that generates a block table by identifying blocks of connected components and determining the position of each occurrence for each of the exemplars in each of the blocks. Finally, Yajima fails to disclose a data appendix circuit that appends the exemplar table and block table to the document to create a notarized document capable of being authenticated.

Because each and every feature of claim 9 is not disclosed in Yajima, Yajima does not anticipate claim 9 or claims dependent therefrom.

With respect to independent claim 17, Yajima fails to disclose an apparatus that verifies the authenticity of a notarized document as claimed. Yajima does not store image data of a notarized document that includes an exemplar table and block table as claimed. Yajima also does not disclose a decompression circuit that constructs a verifying document using the exemplar table and the block table. Instead, Yajima merely outputs a formatted document based on the symbols, which is not a verifying document. Finally, Yajima fails to disclose a comparing circuit that compares the verifying document image (constructed using the tables) to the image data of the notarized document to determine if the notarized document is genuine as claimed.

Because each and every feature of claim 17 is not disclosed in Yajima, Yajima does not anticipate claim 17 or claims dependent therefrom.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 2, 10 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yajima in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,615,268 to Bisbee et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Yajima is discussed above. Bisbee is relied upon for disclosing a digital signature. However, Bisbee fails to overcome the deficiencies of Yajima with respect to independent claims 1, 9 or 17. Accordingly, dependent claims 2, 10 and 18 are allowable for their dependence on allowable base claims as well as for the additional features recited therein. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Stephen P. Catlin
Registration No. 36,101

JAO:SPC/axl

Date: September 27, 2005

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

DEPOSIT ACCOUNT USE AUTHORIZATION Please grant any extension necessary for entry; Charge any fee due to our Deposit Account No. 24-0037
--